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## What People Think When It Comes to Animals in Research

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# Research Proposal: What People Think When It Comes to Animals in Research

Psy-4370-W01 Psychology Capstone Spring 2020

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## Abstract

The purpose of this proposed study is to examine the opinions of different age groups on animal rights and animals in research. This is important to study because it can bring attention to animals being abused and it can possibly help find a substitute for animal testing. The sample for this study will be 50 participants who are between 15 and 21, 22 and 32, 33 and 45, 46 and 60, and 70 and older. Participants will be asked to complete a low risk survey, on paper and pencil, that focuses on animal rights and the way animals get treated in research labs. The expected outcome of these results are that the 70 and older age group will be more likely not as supportive for animal rights whereas the younger age groups would be more supportive of animal rights.

## Introduction

Animals being tested on affects us in our everyday lives, even if people don't know that it's happening. This is a problem because if people do not know that animals get tested on or that the products they are using have animals being tested on then they cannot switch products or will continue to use products that test on animals. Researchers and companies test on animals for make-up, shampoo, and many other products.

An article by Birdsall and France (2011) mentions how women in New Zealand did not know all of the specifics when it came to animal testing. When asked, the women from New Zealand identified some of the rodents that were being tested on but were not aware of the amount of birds, sheep, cattle, fish, and reptiles that were also tested on. In this article, Birdsall and France (2011) asked "What comes to mind when they thought about the use of animals in research, testing, and teaching" (p. 17). The answer cruelty was the most common answer.

In a study done by Nibert (1994), it mentions how younger people are more likely to support animal rights than older people, women are more likely than men, and those who live in cities are more likely than those in rural areas. This is relevant because if people who want to work on ending animal testing figure out which age groups are more likely to support animal rights, that age group can work with companies or researchers to try to make a difference to animals who are being tested on.

It is also relevant to mention the study done by Park and Valentino (2019) because they mention how those who support animal rights strongly are more likely to support disadvantaged groups, including LGBTQ, racial minorities, undocumented immigrants, and the poor. This is important to mention because if the same people who support disadvantaged groups are more likely to support animals. It is also relevant to mention because if the participants in any of our age groups are part of a marginalized group or support minorities, then they are more likely to be supportive and lenient towards animal rights, which can change the way our results turn out.

Cahill's article suggests that cosmetic users who used to use animal tested products have switched to cruelty free make-up (2018). Cahill got their results by emailing out questionnaires to individuals who work in the cosmetic industry who are now cruelty-free. They also surveyed cosmetic consumers to see how their perspectives and loyalties have changed towards cosmetic brands that test on animals. This article shows that if the consumers decide that they don't want to use make-up that has been tested on animals, then the brands will switch to cruelty free methods. Cahill's article is important to mention because seeing what peoples' opinions are on animal testing and using what was found in Cahill's article can be a way to start the change the animals are hoping to see.

In this proposal, the focus is on the differences in opinions on animal rights and animals in research and testing based on age. The hypothesis is that younger age groups will be more supporting of animal rights than older age groups will be. Finding the difference between the ages can be important because it shows what age groups are more likely to cause a change when it comes to animal rights and testing. In this study, support of animal rights is defined based off of the three questions asked in the survey.



## Methods

### Participants

For this study, there will be 50 participants total. There will be five different age groups with 10 participants in each group that are decided by the participant's age. The age groups would be 15 to 21, 22 to 32, 33 to 45, 46 to 60 and 70 or older. To get participants, the survey will be sent in the mail, so that the participants are all different ages. The addresses will come from a random address generator online. Along with the survey will be another envelope with the return address and a stamp on it inside of the envelope with the survey in it so it is easy for them to mail it back. There will be an offer of twenty dollars as a compensation for their participation in this study.

### Materials and Procedure

The predictor variable would be their age and this information will be gathered by using the age that they stated they are on the survey. The criterion variable would be their opinions when it comes to animal rights and animals used in research and this will be measured by the low risk survey that they will be completing. The participants will complete a survey that will be set up as a Likert scale. This survey will ask these questions about animal rights and animals used in testing, "How do you feel about animals being tested on in research," "How do you feel about animals being tested on for cosmetics," "How do you feel about ending animals being tested on?" Each question will have a scale of 1-5 as the answers, 1 being very unhappy or completely against and 5 being very happy or completely in support of. After all the data has been collected, the average of those numbers from each participant's survey will be calculated and combined into a single score.



## Predicted Results

I will be using a correlational analysis for this study. I chose this statistical test because I am trying to determine if there is a relationship between age and opinion. I believe that there will be a positive correlation with younger people supporting animal rights. If the results are not as expected, then the opposite of what I am looking for could happen, the older participants could be more for animal rights than the younger participants. Also, there is the possibility of no relationship between age and opinion on animals used in research. The possibility of no relationship might happen due to the different opinions with every person in the group rather than the group sharing the same opinions.

## Discussion

If the expected results, that younger people are more likely to be against animals in research compared to older people, are shown true then someone could use that information to help stop using animals in research and in cosmetics. People could use the information of which age groups are more likely to support animal rights by having that age group start the change by changing their cosmetics that test on animals to cosmetics that don't test on animals or to stand up against animals in research. The expected results can help save a lot of animals and help support the companies who are cruelty free.

The research done by Nibert (1994) states that younger people are more likely to support animal rights and so are women. By using Nibert's study, people can expect that women would want to stop using cosmetics that test on animals and that younger people in general might protest against companies or research that tests on animals.

Cahill (2018) has an article that says if the customers stop buying products that test on animals, then the consumers will stop making products that test on animals. By using this information, women can stop using the products that test on animals and start using products that are cruelty free. This can start to cause a change and eventually end animal testing.

It is also important to educate people on animal testing. For example, they can be taught what animals are tested on, what it can do to the animal, why animals are tested on, and more. This can be important because it can help educate people if they do not know about the topic. In the article done by Birdsall and France (2011), the women did not even know what animals got tested on. These women did not understand the specifics when it came to animals being tested on. If they were educated on the subject, they can form a more educated opinion and would more than likely become against animal testing if they are not already.

Animals are tested on every day and most people don't even give it a second thought. People continue to use products that they don't know if the product tests on animals or not. No one can start to change unless they educate themselves on the topic. This research is going to be used to start a change that can save many animals lives. If people can use this research to change a few other people's minds, then they can eventually end animals being used in research and fight for animal rights.

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